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Comment :

Sirs,

As a long time amateur radio operator, I feel that it is a very grave error to completely eliminate morse code testing as a requirement for obtaining a license. As a Morse Code Preservation Society (FISTS) member, I urge you to reconsider completely eliminating morse code from amateur radio testing. Sufficient modification of the requirments has already been accomplished in years past. Completely taking morse code testing away from amateur radio will be devastating. Not only is morse code our only real filter during testing, it is a tradition that is as old as amateur radio itself. Removing morse code testing would be an insult to me and the thousands of others that worked very long and hard for our licenses. Now with the proposed dropping of morse code testing, there will be a sudden inrush of ill-prepared and inexperienced operators which will make for un-necessary additional problems on the high frequency bands. Plus, I expect that their amateur radio communications experience will be severely cheapened, having "gotten something for nothing". Why work towards a higher class license when the FCC will simply hand us high frequency privileges on a silver platter? We should just wait long enough and it will become reality. No work involved, and no incentive to better themselves.

Having done a 22 year military career as a Senior Morse Code Intercept/Electronic Warfare Systems Operator, in addition to 30-plus years as a licensed amateur, I know

the value of morse code. To take this away from amateur radio would be to rob our great country of a valuable resource and pool of trained personnel. We would no longer be able to sufficiently live up to our charter as emergency communicators.

Once again, I strongly urge you to retain a minimum of 5 wpm morse code testing requirement for at least one amateur radio license class, as per the proposal of the American Radio Relay League.

Thank you very much.

Best regards,

Gary E. Kohtala - K7EK

FISTS # 3951